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REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated May 5, 2003.

Applicant expresses appreciation for the thoroughness of the prior art search. By this amendment applicant has cancelled a substantial number of the claims under examination and has amended the remaining claims to define the invention with greater particularity, thereby reducing the issues and, ideally, placing the application in condition for allowance.

Claims 10-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. By this amendment, claims 10-18 are cancelled, rendering further discussion with respect thereto moot.

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Walker (U.S. 5,597,992) in view of WO 98/11582. The rejection asserts that it would be obvious to use the method of the WO98/11582 publication ( to fabricate) the interrupter assembly of Walker for the purpose of securing the circuit interrupter within the housing (of Walker). This rejection is respectfully traversed as to claims 1-9 as amended.

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The WIPO publication discloses ensleeving a vacuum assembly with a silicone sleeve by stretching the sleeve with the aid of an expandable bladder and a suction (vacuum) device.

The Walker patent shows a sleeve of polymeric material, polyurethane, located about the casing of an interrupter. That sub-assembly is encased in a moulded enclosure 16. Walker doesn't explain how the subassembly wound up inside that moulded enclosure, but from the geometry of Fig. 1 of Walker, enclosure 16 would be required to be moulded over the sub-assembly. Insertion into the enclosure, as recited in the claims, appears to be a physical impossibility in Walker.

More specifically, in the sentence bridging columns 3 and 4 of Walker, the patent states: "*Polyurethane 19 is disposed around casing 24 in bore 18.*" However, inspecting Fig. 1 of Walker, one is unable to find a description of how casing 21 with polyurethane sleeve 19, including the side branch formed integrally therewith and surrounding terminal 60, is located within the insulated housing or enclosure 16. From a fair reading of the specification, and, in particular, giving credence to the statement at column 3, lines 62 and 63 of Walker, which states: "*Enclosure 16 is moulded in an insulating material such as a cycloaliphatic epoxy 54,*" together with the passage at column 7, line 60 through column 8 line 2, it seems clear that Walker is concerned with encapsulation of the polyurethane coated casing 24 during the moulding of enclosure 16. That conclusion is reinforced at column 2, lines 54-56 of Walker which states: "*Further, the*

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*present invention provides a means of sealing the encapsulation die during production."*

The WIPO publication also deals unambiguously with encapsulation of the vacuum interrupter into the insulated body or housing.

Thus, neither of the applied references contemplates the step of insertion of a vacuum interrupter into a pre-moulded housing as recited in the method of claim 1. To emphasize that distinction claim 1 has been amended to refer to a pre-moulded polymeric housing and to a removable location of the interrupter into the polymeric housing. Those steps are neither shown or taught by either of the references. For the foregoing reason applicant submits that claim 1 cannot be rendered obvious by any combination of Walker and the WIPO publication.

Dependent claims 2 through 9 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 1 recite additional aspects of the method and include all of the limitations in claim 1. Applicant refers to the discussion of the rejection of claim 1, which is incorporated herewithin. For the foregoing reason application submits that claims 2-9 cannot be rendered obvious by any combination of Walker and the WIPO publication. Accordingly, applicant submits that claims 2 through 9 also recite patentable subject matter.

The present specification discusses the disadvantages of prior art of encapsulated vacuum interrupters in the paragraphs bridging pages 3 and 4, in that the electrical integrity of the housing cannot be tested until assembly is complete. If found

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defective then the entire assembly, including the expensive, but otherwise functional, vacuum interrupter must be discarded. In contrast, with the present invention, the vacuum interrupter may be removed and inserted into an alternate housing. Even if the vacuum interrupter is found to require replacement, if the interrupter is encapsulated in the housing, the entire assembly must be discarded.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1-9.

It is believed that the foregoing amendment to the claims places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early notice of allowability is respectfully requested.

The patent to Luehring, U.S. 4,568,804, cited of interest by Examiner, was considered. However, although of interest, applicant agrees with Examiner that the patent does not merit additional discussion.

#### CLAIM SUMMARY

Claims 1-32 were originally presented in the application. Claims 19-32 were withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. By this amendment claims 10-18 were cancelled, leaving claims 1-9 remaining in the application for examination.

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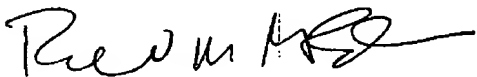
## CLAIM FEE

This amendment reduces the total number of claims in the application and reduces the number of independent claims in the application from the number covered by the fee previously paid. Accordingly, no additional claim fee is due.

## TIME EXTENSION

This amendment is filed during the first month following the expiration of the three-month shortened statutory period for response, and, accordingly, is filed late, which requires the payment of a one-month time extension fee. Applicant requests a one month extension of time in which to file the present amendment. The fee of \$110 required of a large entity for obtaining the time extension is paid by charge to the undersigned's deposit account, which is authorized in the transmittal letter for this amendment.

Respectfully submitted,



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